KironSleep Disorders Center

Care and Cleaning of your CPAP unit

Your CPAP machine enables you to breathe freely during the night and avoid all the health problems associated with obstructive sleep apnea. Naturally, you will want to make sure that you keep the unit and accessories in good working order. Fortunately, taking care of your unit requires little more than proper cleaning.

- Mask and tubing

Both the mask and the tubing should be cleaned every morning. Daily cleaning is necessary as a preventative measure, not because the parts will get that dirty in one night. The idea is to clean the parts before there is any build up. Additionally, the silicone used to make the mask is very sensitive to the natural oils of your skin. If not cleaned from the mask, the oils will cause the material to stiffen, leading to increased leakage and discomfort.

The mask and tubing should be washed with soapy water. Regular dish soap is best. Avoid soaps with lots of moisturizers or fragrances, as these may leave a residue. Rinse once with tap water and then a second time with a 50/50 mix of vinegar and water. (Any type of distilled vinegar is fine.) You don't need to dunk the parts into the vinegar solution. Pour about ¼ cup into the tubing and run it back and forth through the tubing. Simply slosh a bit of vinegar solution over the mask.

If you are using humidifier, it must be cleaned daily, just like the mask and tubing.

Allow the parts to air dry. Hang the hose so that both ends are down and water will not collect in the tubing. If you wash the parts in the morning, they will be dry when you next need them.

~Daily~
Wash with soapy water
Rinse once with tap water

~Weekly~
Once a week, after rinsing the tap water rinse, rinse with vinegar water (equal parts vinegar & water)

- Filters

Most CPAP units have a permanent foam filter. This filter should be cleaned on at least a weekly basis. More frequent cleaning might not be a bad idea, especially if the unit is running in a dusty environment. Clean the permanent filter the same way you clean the mask and hose. Be sure that the filter is completely dry before putting it back in the machine.

Some people, particularly those with allergies, also use a white disposable filter. The disposable filter doesn't get washed. Simply replace the filter once a month or sooner if you notice it is getting dirty.

ResMed CPAP units only have disposable filters. The filter life is 3 to 6 months, depending on machine model.

- Traveling

Take your CPAP unit with you. If you have apnea at home, your going to have it everywhere else. Do not check the CPAP unit as luggage. It will not survive the trip. Take it as carry-on.

If your travel plans do not allow the hose and tubing time to air dry, you can still clean them. Just hook up the hose and mask to the machine and run the machine for 15 to 20 minutes. That should dry everything out. Do not do this if you have washed the permanent filter, as well. Never put a wet filter in the machine, or run the machine without the filter.

Some machines will shut off automatically or sound an alert if you are not wearing the mask. Consult your user's manual to learn how to turn off this option.

Vox 919-382-3240

Fax 919-382-7282